

REMARKS

Claim Rejections

Claims 1 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), as being anticipated by Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (Fig. 6). Claims 2 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Applicant's Admitted Prior Art in view of Hoshino (5,044,249). Claims 3-7, and 10-19 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Drawings

It is noted that no Patent Drawing Review (Form PTO-948) was received with the outstanding Office Action. Thus, Applicant must assume that the drawings are acceptable as filed.

Claim Amendments

By this Amendment, Applicant has canceled claims 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 12 and 16, and amended claims 1, 6, 15 and 17 of this application. It is believed that the amended claims now specifically set forth each element of Applicant's invention in full compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 3-7 and 10-19 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Applicant's amended claim 1 comprises a combination of original claims 1, 2 and 3, thus redrafting claim 3 in independent form. Original claims 4, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 18 and 19, and amended claims 6, 15 and 17 all depend from amended claim 1. In the absence of any art cited against Applicant's original claim 3, it is not believed that any detailed discussion of the cited prior art references is necessary. Suffice it to say that all of the claims remaining in this patent application contain subject matter against which no prior art citation have been made.

Summary

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that this application is now in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. Should any points remain in issue, which the Examiner feels could best be resolved by either a personal or a telephone interview, it is urged that Applicant's local attorney be contacted at the exchange listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: July 14, 2005

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